



Ms. Laura Peters, Senior Engineer
California Department of Water Resources
Division of Integrated Regional Water Management
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September 2, 2014

RE: Comments on the Water-Energy Grant Proposal Solicitation Package

Ms. Peters,

On behalf of the Council for Watershed Health, I want to thank you for the effort you have expended in creating the draft 2014 Water-Energy Grant Program: Guidelines and Proposal Solicitation Package (PSP). We think the water-energy nexus is an important framework for improving resource consumption and conservation in Southern California, and we appreciate the opportunity to submit comments with the hope of improving the program for our stakeholders and all Californians.

The PSP states that grant funding is to “support the implementation of residential, commercial, and institutional water efficiency programs or projects that reduce GHG emissions and also reduce water and energy use.” It is our understanding that DWR does not explicitly include and may implicitly exclude water conservation efforts surrounding stormwater capture and reuse within this definition. We would like to see projects that produce local water supply from stormwater explicitly included in the PSP.

Storm water capture, infiltration, and reuse projects often do result in significant residential, commercial, and institutional water savings and efficiency. In general these projects use diverted rain water for irrigation, thus decreasing use of potable water. Further, storm water capture can augment groundwater supplies reducing the amount of imported water pumped into Southern California. Not only do these projects result in significant water and embedded energy savings, they make our state more resilient to drought.

The Los Angeles River discharges over 230,000 acre-feet/year of storm water and treated waste water.¹ If some portion of this storm water were captured and used to displace use of potable water then potable water use could be reduced or diverted to other needs. In a 2006 study the Metropolitan Water District (MWD) estimated over 3,000,000 acre-feet of available groundwater storage capacity in their service area.² MWD has estimated in its Integrated Water Resources Plan 2014 Update that the groundwater basins underlying the Greater Los Angeles County Integrated Regional Water Management Plan (GLAC IRWMP) planning area

¹ <http://www.lariver.org/About/LARiverFacts/index.htm>

-also-

http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb9//water_issues/programs/stormwater/docs/updates101512/Nasseri_Presentation.pdf

² <http://www.mwdh2o.com/mwdh2o/pages/yourwater/supply/groundwater/PDFs/PlateIII-6.pdf>


have long-term storage potential of an additional 1,199,000 acre-feet.³ After three years of drought, this available capacity has increased considerably. Again, captured storm water can help refill these groundwater basins assisting in future water supply stability and local sourcing.

The GLAC IRWM 2014 Plan Update lists increasing recharge of recycled water supplies and increasing storm water recharge as two opportunities for groundwater management. The Update also lists increasing recharge of storm water and use of storm water for landscape irrigation as two opportunities for storm water quality and flood management. This IRWM Plan Update represents the consensus of Los Angeles County cities, water agencies and other stakeholders on the best practices for regional water management.

In his Fiscal Year 2014-2015 Budget Summary, Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti set a goal of reducing imported water by 50% by 2025.⁴ Mayor Garcetti demonstrates a significant example of the growing political will in Southern California to implement projects, such as storm water capture and reuse, which reduce our reliance on imported water and the embedded energy that goes along with it.

The Council is Southern California's trusted hub for watershed research, analysis and education. Our Vision 2025 pushes us to work toward a Southern California that is a model of sustainable urban watershed management, with clean waters, reliable local water supplies, restored native habitats, ample parks and open spaces, integrated flood management, and revitalized rivers and urban centers. I hope these suggestions will be considered Water-Energy Grant Proposal Solicitation Package. Please don't hesitate to call if you have questions.

Sincerely,



Nancy L.C. Steele, D.Env.
Executive Director

CC Michael Drennan
Board President

³ *Ibid*

⁴ http://cao.lacity.org/budget14-15/2014-15Budget_Summary.pdf